Designing exploratory partnerships in Southeast Asia: The challenge of building a sustainable ecosystem to address chronic malnutrition

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EGOS Sub-theme 68: Power and Inequality: Organizing and organization in transforming societies and emerging economies

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Introduction

According to the last special issue of the Lancet on maternal and child nutrition, malnutrition linked to under nutrition —including fetal growth restriction, stunting, wasting, and deficiencies of vitamin A and zinc along with suboptimum breastfeeding— is a cause of 3.1 million child deaths annually or 45% of all child deaths in 2011 (Black, et al., 2013). Stakeholders from all over the word, gathered within various organizations, from public to private sector, tend to work together to fight against this disease that affects very vulnerable people, predominantly in developing countries, through operations most of the time lead by NGOs, United Nations and governmental actors (World Health Organization, 2003). However, these stakeholders are generally highly dependent on numerous geopolitical issues taking place in the affected geographical areas, and form together a highly fragmented ecosystem, which appears to be not efficient enough to provide nutrition solutions to all affected children. Thus, innovative partnerships beyond NGOs, local actors and public agencies need to be explored, for instance with private actors, to consider new ways to structure such a sustainable ecosystem. Achieving such sustainability represents the first managerial objective of these expected new partnerships, so as to encompass a higher

robustness of their organizational capability to provide efficient solutions, even with geopolitical crisis.

Secondly, one generally thinks about malnutrition as a punctual under nutrition resulting from geopolitical tensions or climatic distresses that could be overcome by giving nutritional solutions to local populations. These situations do occur and cause dramatic health crises where NGOs play a key role to coordinate the international support to local populations (Barrett & Maxwell, 2007); but researchers have also identified for decades that chronic malnutrition could also result from dietary habits that are linked to specific sociocultural contexts. For instance, in some Asiatic cultures, foods high in protein (meat, fish, eggs) are still frequently considered as being too rich and heavy for small children (Graves, 1976; Super, et al., 2014). The latter contexts require a radically different approach to efficiently overcome malnutrition for two main reasons: first, the aim is not to cure an easily identifiable patient due to severe disease symptoms anymore, but to prevent and change nutritional habits at the family level, especially among maternal education concerning child development; and second, the mass of affected children is altogether much larger, unlinked to specific geopolitical crises and delicate to evaluate due to discrete disease symptoms of stunting that are uneasy to detect without a longitudinal care. This shift in the understanding of how to treat the disease entails necessarily deep changes in the structuration of an appropriate ecosystem to deal with it, which in turn highlights a second managerial goal of exploring new types of partnerships: the need for a *collective capability for innovation*.

In this paper, we tackle the organizational issue of building a sustainable ecosystem, both robust and innovative, to prevent chronic malnutrition in Southeast Asia, which specifically fits with the challenge of organizing in transforming societies and emerging economies addressed by the sub-theme 68 of EGOS'16. In particular, we study the building of innovative partnerships that contribute to long-term nutrition transition in this area where there international funds alone are not sufficient to support the stunting prevention, and thus private and public actors must work to develop hybrids models.

Theoretical background

From new markets to collaborations for sustainable business models in emerging economies

When considering to involve private actors into the development of sustainable solutions for societal problems in emerging economies, the main recent theoretical development is the

"*Bottom of the Pyramid approach*" (Prahalad and Hart, 2002). Prahalad and Hart (2002) indeed show that poverty encompasses more than four billion people living on less than two dollars a day. Although this definition of poverty was challenged thereafter (Karnani, 2006), several authors agree on the fact that this population represents an economic potential, ready to consume but unable to access existing markets. The *Bottom of the Pyramid*, or BoP, approach therefore seeks to adapt an existing offer by working on the concepts of accessibility, acceptability, availability and awareness (the so-called "Four A's") of products and services by considering the most vulnerable populations as potential *consumers* (Anderson and Markides, 2007; Seelos and Mair, 2007; Subrahmanyan and Tomas Gomez-Arias, 2008).

However dominant this view can be in contemporary research, other authors insist that there is in fact no unexplored demand (Simanis and Hart, 2009), and that considering the most vulnerable people – the first and largest stage of the pyramid – only as potential consumers cannot ground a sustainable business approach (Karnani, 2006). Instead, they show that private and public actors must innovate jointly by building new business models for populations with little or no income, in which these vulnerable populations can be considered as contributing actors in the value chain establishment and actively participate in the development of their ecosystem (Karnani, 2006, Yunus et al, 2010).

As a result, the "market" at the bottom of the pyramid (BoP) can be defined quite differently, which makes two models of the BoP theories coexist. The first one is based on the capture of an existing value, retrospectively coined as "BoP 1.0", whereas the second one aims to reflect on new business models, the so-called "BoP 2.0". Organizing financial accessibility for people with low income – the Social business concept (Yunus et al, 2010) – is one of the pillars of BoP 2.0 theories. Following this approach, investors in a social business are mandated to respond to societal needs and can't target personal financial benefit, as all profits must be reinvested in the development of the firm, which aims to reach self-financing. International companies appear to be very effective at the development of business ecosystem for the bottom of the pyramid but several authors stress the importance of establishing local partnerships: in particular, NGOs and international organizations are highlighted as crucial partners, because they have in-depth knowledge about the local ecosystem (Hart and Sharma, 2004 Reficco and Marquez, 2009). However, some political order partners, although essential in some situations, can also prove to hinder economic development (Seelos and Mair, 2007). It then becomes compulsory to develop hybrid value chains (Budinich et al., 2006) to co-build business models based on the creation of mutual value to both economic and social partners.

In such collaborations, a broader definition of shared value where the economic value is not only attributed to the company (Porter and Kramer (2011)) appears to be essential to build an ecosystem (Budinich et al. (2006)).

Exploratory partnerships

Theories of BoP and the experiences of companies relayed by researchers reveal the need to set up partnerships with local actors to build new business models. Thus, the aim of partnerships is twofold: sustainable collaboration and innovation. Studying industrial innovation management, the concept of *exploratory partnerships* was coined by Segrestin (2005) to characterize strategic alliances set up by organizations in their very early phase of new product development. When these partnerships are established, the purpose of the collaboration is not clearly defined between the stakeholders due to the expectation of innovative outcomes, and the novelty of the relationship between players, but can be stated as to design collectively. These types of partnerships appear very different from co-development partnerships, as even if the actors are proactive in the construction of collaboration objects, they remain in their field of expertise (Beaume, Maniak, & Midler, 2009; Gillier, Piat, Roussel, & Truchot, 2010). Exploratory partnerships are thus characterized by a double precariousness (Segrestin, 2005), i.e. a precarious cohesion as the actors can not define *a priori* the legitimacy of their actions and a precarious cooperation as they are unable to draw the object of their collaboration or even the organization of the collective. In line with Chesbrough (2003), who underlined the need for a company to open its borders to innovate, input from open innovation, exploratory partnerships or innovation partnerships are increasingly studied in order to bring a better understanding of the elements to both academics and industrial managers. Gillier, et al. (2010) states that the vast majority of the literature has focused on the cooperation between a restricted number of entities (two or three organizations) within the same industry (automotive, telecommunications) and on the specification of the innovative object (Beaume, et al., 2009; Segrestin, 2005). Indeed, some authors make references to strategic alliances between entities from different industrial sectors (Gillier, et al., 2010). More specifically, some works highlight the variety of performance indicators of an exploratory partnership, for instance financial value (Belderbos et al. 2010) or intellectual value (Meyer and Subramaniam, 2014), of radical or incremental innovations (Enkel and Gassmann, 2010), whereas others were interested in the development and understanding of the collective (Brunswicker and Hutschek, 2010, Gillier et al., 2010; Gassmann et al., 2010; Linnarsson Werr, 2004). As a result, Linnarsson and Werr (2004)

ensure that the contractual terms linking the actors must be able to withstand some flexibility and offer an organizational structure supporting three levels: operational, intermediate and strategic. Gassmann et al. (2010), as well as Segrestin (2005), state the importance of granting strong autonomy to the various actors and to have tangible and measurable results such as prototypes to reassure the collective and maintain the cohesion in the time. Moreover, some studied the generation mechanisms of a cooperation object between organizations from different sectors through a new approach to creativity and proposition of new management tools (Gillier, et al., 2010).

Nevertheless, these academic studies are very recent and indeed very scarce. Furthermore, this literature does not mention exploration partnerships studies to co-build an innovative ecosystem in emerging countries although some authors stress the importance of developing collaborations for innovation (Hart and Sharma, 2004; Reficco and Marquez, 2009; Seelos and Mair, 2007). Indeed, the literature on new business models in emerging countries leaded by firms in cooperation examined more the patterns of business due to ethical and moral values (Budinich et al., 2006, Karnani, 2006, Prahalad and Hart, 2002) than impacts of the innovation context on the partnerships.

Research gap

Looking for bridges between the two theoretical backgrounds, the literature seems to fail to characterize exploratory partnerships established to build a robust and innovative ecosystem in emerging economies: cooperation mechanisms and governance around exploratory partnership-models face many uncertainties. Considering the theoretical inputs, our research aims to investigate the potential of exploratory partnership concept for the particular contexts of collaboration to prevent chronic malnutrition in Southeast Asia. There is a research gap to overcome on both the goals of robustness and innovativeness of such an organizational framework to build a novel and sustainable ecosystem, whereas the model of exploratory partnership was originally settled for new products development in *integrated industrial ecosystems*. The case of chronic malnutrition in Southeast Asia specifically involves an unstable ecosystem, which must build its robustness among numerous, trans-sectorial and heterogeneous stakeholders, from private and public organizations, small and large institutions (nutritional & agribusiness industries, NGOs, government, doctors, nutritionist, wholesalers and retailers, etc.) and territorially dispersed over the world, in order to develop an innovation capability focused on new business models rather than on new products. More specifically, our research question is focused on the management tools and cooperation

mechanisms that can be implemented to generate new sharing levers of value within the ecosystem of malnutrition to create such a specific and sustainable collaborative system.

Material and method of analysis

Our research relies on the case study (Yin, 2009) of the initiatives of a French SME and its partners to support the building of an ecosystem against chronic malnutrition in Southeast Asia. This French SME, Nutriset, is a particularly relevant actor to study our research question because the firm is actively involved in worldwide malnutrition ecosystem for decades. It is an industrial actor specialized in the design and production of treatments for vulnerable populations and in particular child malnutrition. Since the adoption by NGOs of their innovative product Plumpy'nut® in the 1990's that created a breakthrough for treating child suffering from severe acute malnutrition, they became the world leader on nutritional solutions for malnutrition disease. Consequently, they are very experienced in cooperation with NGOs and local authorities, as well as with experts of malnutrition (doctors, nutritionists, etc.) and they gathered all needed skills to produce very high quality nutritional products. Moreover, they are interested in developing their innovation processes and they were yet involved in exploratory partnerships with African and European players.

Southeast Asia represents a new challenge for the firm, but the importance of malnutrition in this area urges Nutriset to try to develop specific solutions. Indeed, the area represents both a strategic and disruptive diversification strategy for the firm for three reasons: although malnutrition is high, Southeast Asian governments do not always recognize malnutrition as a critical issue, and are often more protectionists than African governments limiting thereby the possibility of NGOs actions; manufactured imports are often badly perceived by locals actors; and this area gathers more cases of chronic malnutrition than severe malnutrition, which are, as underlined previously, really different disease to care and prevent.

The research takes place within a longitudinal research partnership with Nutriset on the governance of social business and organizational capabilities for disruptive innovation that linked the research team and firm's top management team since 2011 (Agogué, Levillain, & Hooge, 2015; Levillain, Agogué, & Berthet, 2014). In particular, innovation processes and collaborative organizations for the prevention of chronic malnutrition in Southeast Asia has become a specific topic of the research partnership since January 2013 (Agogué, et al., 2015). The research presented in this paper focuses on the results that emerged within this context from an intervention research (Hatchuel & David, 2007; Radaelli, Guerci, Cirella, & Shani,

2012) conducted from May 2015 to November 2015 by one of the author, who specially studied the research question presented here. The others authors were involved in the longitudinal partnership with the firm since 2011 and in the theory building process (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007), two as researchers and two as industrial partners from Nutriset respectively in charge of the partnership development in Southeast Asia and innovation management for the firm.

In addition to material stemming from the mentioned longitudinal partnership, specific material consists in:

- twelve semi-structured interviews of main Nutriset actors on activities and partnership with Southeast Asia since 2011 (from the CEO to project leaders and collaborators);
- the analysis of the internal documentation of the firm on these activities (Meeting minutes and reports of meetings and travel in Asia, presentation materials);
- the analysis, participation and/or facilitation of three collaborative workshops with an Asian Agrifood firm, a consulting firm specialized in international branding strategy and Nutriset.

Due to large amount of data collected from both the longitudinal partnership and the specific study of Southeast Asia context, the analysis requires data reduction (Åhlström & Karlsson, 2009) and contextual knowledge from the intensive collaboration with practitioners supports a theory generation based on the results from the fieldwork and case analysis (Shani & Coghlan, 2008).

Case analysis

Relying on their experience on other emergent markets and the success on the diffusion of an efficient industrial treatment against malnutrition, Nutriset top-managers and executives engaged the firm R&D department in a global project to fight against malnutrition, including Southeast Asia as a strategic area for business and solutions development. Following various opportunities such as executive managers' travels and meetings with local players, they analyzed that the strong rate of chronic malnutrition in the designated countries occurs despite the fact that populations are facing a completely saturated market in food products (not enriched for nutritional benefits). Therefore, at the beginning of the intervention research in May 2015, the firm's managers were questioning the feasibility of entering the Asian market, based on both a new business model, relying on a range of products for prevention of malnutrition, and a specific collaborative system, that would involve a group of non-traditional economic actors. Several months before, they pre-identified two actors to

collaborate on the building of a dedicated offer in the emergent market: one of Nutriset's incumbent suppliers and a local food company, which owns an efficient distribution network in Southeast Asia. To decide how to interact with these players, R&D department actors led two main actions that we describe below: a modeling of the knowledge they acquired within the firm since 2011 on the specificities of the market in Southeast Asia, and a modeling of potential benefits and limits for the firm of the different partnership strategies they could led to sustain the establishment of a robust and innovative ecosystem to fight malnutrition.

Making the understanding of the emergent market specificities visible and shareable

Through the analysis empirical material, we observed the importance for the company to gather and capitalize on the knowledge the firm had acquired since 2011 on chronic malnutrition and food market in the area. In particular, the company participated during the last months in various workshops with a group of external stakeholders: one of Nutriset's suppliers, and a consulting firm specialized in marketing strategy in international brand positioning. These workshops aimed to build the history of a specific brand that Nutriset wishes to position on the field of the prevention of malnutrition in Southeast Asia. These actors thus jointly explored a possible strategy by mutually sharing knowledge on consumers' expectations in Southeast Asia. According to these workshops, the company conducted an operational step in its understanding of existing markets in the area and an exploratory stage where new models of the learning were generated.

To structure all the knowledge shared, R&D actors built a *marketing mix*, which aimed both to socialize among Nutriset collaborators the knowledge gained during the workshops but also to define a potential strategy for a new business model development in the Southeast Asia market. The aim of this learning consolidation was to identify knowledge gaps to overcome to build a sustainable and efficient prevention strategy in the market of Southeast Asia. This accumulation step has resulted in two visible objects that support a diffusion and further investigations of the emergent market specificities. The first one was a timeline that graphically highlighted the main steps of learning and associated potential strategic key points: this shareable modeling allows Nutriset collaborators to visualize the learning conducted by each department, the variety of actions that had been conducted since 2011 and the geographical areas of the Asia where actions were already led.

Then, the R&D department designed a family of innovative nutritional prototypes, which materialize their understanding of chronicle malnutrition at that time, the expectations of local

customers and the nature of industrial solutions they could propose to the emergent market. Relying on the shareability of the knowledge embodiment, Nutriset's CEO decided to present the prototypes to the CEO of a Southeast Asia business firm, which already owns an important food distribution network. The aim of the interaction was mainly to test the accuracy of the firm's understanding on the business specificities of emergent market but we can put forward different hypotheses about the effect that these prototypes might have generated on the robustness and innovativeness of the partnership the two industrial players could initiate around these prototypes.

First, it could have generated a "fixation" (which is a cognitive limitation of the alternatives considered by the actors) on a particular business model with the potential partner. Indeed, although these prototypes were initially designed to test some ways to collaborate with the potential partner, they might have led both firms to consider only a few possibilities, directly derived from the suggested forms of the future products. Thus, these prototypes can influence the framework of collective purpose and direct partner towards a strategy of co-development with a risk to decrease innovation capabilities (Beaume, et al, 2009) or to an exploration partnership to push technology (Segrestin, 2005). They can also impose the object of cooperation on an already identified nutritional technology although the market value remains undefined.

Conversely, the interaction of the potential partners around prototypes can also result in the establishment of a partnership-to-explore, as players will think first of the opportunities and risks they have to work together before discussing the objects of the collaboration (Segrestin, 2005). According to the first results of our case analysis, we would be in a situation where Nutriset tends to discuss foremost objects of collaboration with the food company in South-East Asia. However, the meeting between the two companies does not presuppose the collaborative forms of the resultant partnership.

Lastly, most of these prototypes were far away from the kind of products and markets the firm is used to make and address its business: their existence would then reflect a breakthrough innovation for Nutriset. We might nevertheless wonder about the innovativeness of the nutritional solutions for the food company in Southeast Asia, as the suggested prototypes were designed to gather the specificities of a market this incumbent firm already partly addresses.

Modeling the opportunities and limits of divergent strategies-to-partner for the emergent market

These various knowledge management tools — visible and shareable — have been active in generating strong learning among Nutriset collaborators but also conducting collective action, both internally and externally, with new actors. Nevertheless, the timeline and the family of prototypes reflect both an obvious diversity on the collaborative strategy the firm could lead for the establishment of partnerships in the emergent market.

Building on the first interaction with a local business actor, we built a description of four extreme partnership strategies to support an internal discussion with executives and R&D staff on the managerial dilemma the company faced. Voluntarily, collaboration strategies have not been considered through the development of a product as final perspective but through the potential for the company's business development to lead a pioneering initiative on the emergent market. In addition, during the elicitation of strategy alternatives, we noted the importance for the robustness of the new ecosystem to consider the openness of the collaborative strategy to involve new players not yet identified, also to avoid considering the supplier and / or the food company in South-East Asia as the only or the best potential partners to enter the market of Southeast Asia.

Strategy-to-partner 1: looking for a quick increase of technical skills on prevention nutritional goals and industrial food matrices to fight against chronic malnutrition. This strategy was limited in its application as it appeared inconceivable for R&D collaborators that Nutriset would share, through this innovative partnership, its specific knowledge related to nutrition and especially for enrichment. Thus, there is little chance that Nutriset executives decide to share its basic research, except potentially with the supplier, with which the collaboration is more long-lasting, and where it would be interesting to jointly explore new enrichment matrices. Thus, the main opportunity highlighted by such collaborative strategy is the company's expertise uphill on technical issues on outgoing matrices dominant design.

Strategy-to-partner 2: looking for a quick entry on the emergent market. Different collaboration framework may arise from the implementation of such strategy. A first one could be to outsource product development, industrial development, production, marketing and distribution to a local industrial partner. The identified major risk is that Nutriset could not steer anything in this partnership except the funding. In addition, the company would derive no learning and the issue of intellectual property becomes pivotal. Beyond this full delegation to a local actor, all forms of intermediate subcontracting could be elicited, from the co-development of the product and industrialization with the Southeast Asia food company (for

example) to subcontracting of specific industrial contributions such as marketing and distribution.

This second collaboration strategy allows Nutriset to better control risks and the potential partner to quickly develop skills while considering placing on the market. However, little learning will be generated in marketing and distribution, weakness of Nutriset within its ability to propose a new business model.

Strategy-to-partner 3: Focusing on a specific learning or skill acquisition. With this strategy of knowledge discrimination, the company could steer a learning of a specific competence on the BtoC market through a partnership of co-development, where Nutriset voluntarily takes in charge a specific part of the value chain. The partners could co-develop new business models and distribution systems while outsourcing product development and industrial development.

Strategy-to-partner 4: looking for value exploration with a local partner or emergent market specialists. Various exploration models could well be considered.

The first one is the collaborative exploration of advanced technology: the nutritional technology is more or less identified and controlled by the stakeholders involved in the partnership, and the objects of collaboration is to identify the value of this technology in the emergent market (e.g. if the prototypes presented in Southeast Asia to food business suit him, one could envisage joint exploration of values to assign to these products so that they meet a need in the market). The second one is a technology-driven exploration: the partners have more or less defined the potential of business on the market but must jointly explore technology; and finally, a third one could be a dual exploration of nutritional technologies and possible values of it on the emergent market.

The diversity in organizational strength to assure the robustness of the resulting ecosystems for malnutrition prevention, and also in the innovation potential of the four extreme strategies identified clearly underlines the managerial dilemma the company faced. Moreover, the absence of details from the Southeast Asia food company on the feasibility of a joint venture does not support the choice of a specific strategy-to-partner with them. Furthermore, these scenarios of strategy-to-partner could be combined and are not exhaustive so many other combinations could be considered. Yet, the first three strategies appear as innovative co-development partnerships, which aim to support a quick learning, and focus the partnership to test and exploit together a given new business model in the emergent market, while the last strategy highlights the opportunity to build a partnership-to-explore. So, this work on extreme

strategies allows us to present, through the following table, the various opportunities and limits of new business model exploitation partnerships (co-development) versus partnerships-to-explore that look forward the elicitation of the potential of new business models.

	New business model co-development partnership	**Partnership-to-explore**
Opportunities	- Objects of cooperation mainly identified and shared by stakeholders - Rise in business skills: Partial because the partners are partly or fully complementary - The actors of the partnership can quickly streamline their collaboration, strategic value in the short and medium term - Risk-taking from a financial point of view is lower - Have tangible results quickly	- Rise in business skills: strong (BtoC markets, development, distribution) - Learning collective collaboration with heterogeneous actors - Strategic value over the long term - Ensure a more comprehensive understanding of the market and issues - Being open to new opportunities
Limits	- Risk to locked stakeholders in a less long-term vision and close opportunities - Fail to understand all the issues in these new markets - Natural desire to replicate business models not adapted to this market	- Taking much greater risk for Nutriset business. - Need stakeholder agreement to not completely manage the partnership model and therefore act collectively despite large uncertainties around the objects of cooperation and common collective goal - Strong knowledge gaps

Table 1 Synthesis of opportunities and limits of the different strategies for partnership

Main findings and contributions

The intervention research shows how the company has been exploring new fields of skills and new strategic approaches to understand specificities of Southeast Asian malnutrition and agri-food ecosystem and propose both innovative solutions and robust organizations to support their emergence. Indeed, the various mechanisms put in place within the company led to collective action, either by workshops with external stakeholders or by ones with in-house departments. In addition, we were able to highlight the different collective dynamics and learning that resulted from these collaborative activities, acted as drivers for the construction of the internal strategy.

First, the study highlighted how original uses of three “classic” tools of new development processes (marketing mix, prototyping and a scenario method for strategic building) became

key learning and collaborative devices for an exploratory partnership with an Asian actor. The main result is the collective ability gained through the various devices to clarify, make visible and shareable the business strategy within the company, resulted in a higher confidence of top management team and its legitimacy to involve the firm in this geographic area, and finally to clarify the benefits and limits of various partnership strategies with Southeast Asia societies and institutional players.

Secondly, this study allowed us to rationalize both a managerial and a strategic dilemma about exploratory partnerships in emerging economies. Indeed, exploration and exploitation expectations have challenged the construction of the partnership strategy through which the learning and collaborative devices have performed ambidextrous roles. Robustness of the ecosystem could emerge from both approaches but the innovation potential they encompass radically differs. Moreover, robustness of the resulting partnership from exploitation or exploration collaboration is also different to address chronic malnutrition. The first one will consider a disruptive innovation challenge that need a collective works on a more flexible network of players and interactions rules to build, designing thereby the robustness of the ecosystem by the adequacy of the involved stakeholders' skills with a better understanding of chronic malnutrition, while the exploitation approach designs the robustness of a specific business model, and fixes quickly the players to focus on the establishment of sustainable contractual collaboration.

Consequently, it is not surprising that the ambiguity on the facet of robustness targeted by each partner was difficult to overcome: they were both considered and advocated for! Short-term industrial interests added with a better capacity to identify collaborative actions in an exploitation setting, understandably facilitate the implementation of a co-development partnership. However, all players were also aware that the first identified business model was not sufficiently documented to validate its potential in the long term, and also scarce in innovation potential.

In addition, external collective dynamics have led us to question the social value network as a necessary condition to initiate a collective in emerging economies. Nutriset is a company driven by a social mandate, which is "nutritional autonomy for all". It has actively participated in the construction of the ecosystem of the fight against malnutrition in Africa by building a real network with humanitarian actors for decades. Consequently, the public actors perceive this company as a social business, which is slightly reducing according to the definition of Yunus et al (2010). This may explain the interest that Asian stakeholders

manifest about the opportunity of future collaboration. However, the company is guided by a mandate to meet a societal need while building its strategy, and in the building of partnership strategies that could in return commit its partners. We underlined how Nutriset players were looking for these engagements from others industrial partners in their initiatives to support the building of the new ecosystem for chronic malnutrition.

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